

BEN HUR HERE ALL THIS WEEK

Great Spectacle to be Seen at Academy To-morrow Night.

LARGE CROWDS WILL ATTEND

Excursion Parties to be Here From All Parts of the State.

Ben Hur, perhaps the greatest theatrical production this or any country has ever seen, will commence a week's engagement at the Academy to-morrow night. Scarcely a child in Richmond who has not heard of Ben Hur, the great novel written by General Lew Wallace. Many have read the masterful story, but few have seen its reproduction upon the stage, for the great drama has never been presented in this State. Those who have seen the production in other cities have told of its wonderful beauty and its powerful dramatic scenes, until the fame of Ben Hur has spread through the country, and every village and every hamlet knows this greatest achievement of stagecraft.

The performances this week will be witnessed, not only by Richmonders but by people from all over the State, and even North Carolina and West Virginia will be represented in the audiences, for there are several excursion parties coming here from those States.

Owing to the length of the performance, the curtain will rise each night promptly at eight o'clock, and no one will be seated during the progress of the first act, which is most impressive. The curtain at the matinee performances will also rise half an hour earlier than the usual time.

A large force of mechanics was busy at the Academy all last week, making the necessary alterations to the stage of the playhouse. Every mechanical appliance will be thoroughly tested to-morrow, so that no hitch may occur at the first performance. That is the reason that no matinee is given to-morrow, although the day is a holiday. Ben Hur never opens its engagement with a matinee, because the management insist upon a complete scene rehearsal before a performance is given for the first time upon a new stage. The result of this is that the opening performance goes as smoothly as any of the engagements.

The company comes here from Pittsburgh on a special train. Nothing short

UP AND DOWN!

THE BALLOON IS A HIGH-BALL THAT GOES UP EASY



Great Production.

Klaw and Erlanger have made "Ben Hur" the most important production on the American stage. It is even said that nothing like it for dignity of feature and prodigious cost has ever been seen on any stage in the world. It is entirely a dramatic spectacle of extraordinary interest and beauty. From a commercial point of view, the attention has caused business returns beyond all precedent.

Besides the big company, there is a working staff of seventy-five electricians, and mechanics. More than eight hundred costumes are worn in the development of the play, and all of them are of much beauty. The chariot race requires special foundation laid in cement and impose a weight on the stage of over forty tons.

The Great Race.

This race in "Ben Hur" is said to be the most convincing bit of realism ever presented on the stage. The difficulty of practically developing this wonderful feature was one of the reasons that caused General Lew Wallace, the author of the story, to decline for years to permit the book to be dramatized. The chariot race occurs in the fifth act of the play. It is preceded by a scene showing the exterior of the circus at Antioch. The signal for the race is sounded, and the crowds rush into the arena. The stage is suddenly darkened. A fan-fare of trumpets is heard amid the din of a shouting, riotous multitude. The lights are on. Over the course, through clouds of dust, with sound of muffled thunder, the chariots of Ben Hur

and Messala, each drawn by four blooded horses exactly fitting the description in the book, speed in full career. The walls of the arena, the stalls and galleries, crowded with excited spectators, whirl dizzily by. The four blooded bays of Shiek Ilderim draw past the white-and-black. At the turn the wheel of Messala's chariot spins from its axle. Messala reels in his chariot and falls headlong under the feet of the plunging horses.

The next scene draws the vast curve of the amphitheatre, stretching away in perspective. Ben Hur in his chariot is before the consul's seat, being crowned victor and receiving the plaudits of the people. It cost Klaw & Erlanger \$20,000 to develop this magnificent incident in the play. The horses alone cost them \$7,000—the horse market of the world were scoured to secure them and 120 were tested on the apparatus from this number twelve being selected, suited by temperament for the work.

The first act of "Ben Hur" takes place on the housetop of the Palace of Hur in Jerusalem, and shows the meeting of Ben Hur and Messala on the occasion of the latter's return from Rome. The two friends quarrel and Messala leaves in anger. Their loud tones bring Tirzah, the sister of Hur to know the cause. Bugles announce the approach of the Roman army, numbering among its member, Messala. Ben Hur and Tirzah are looking down into the street below when one Ben Hur's parapet on which they are leaning becomes loosened and crashes into the street wounding Valerius Gratius, the new procurator, and Messala charges that it is a wilful crime of Ben Hur. Ben Hur is arrested and when his mother and sister plead for him they are flung into a leprosy prison and Ben Hur is condemned to the galleys without a trial.

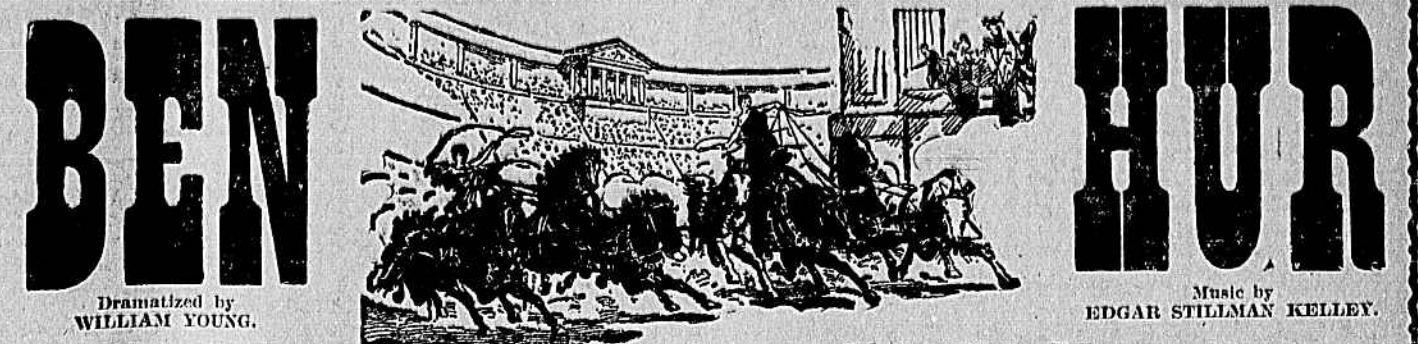
The Roman Galley.

The first scene of the second act shows the interior of the Roman galley, Astraea. There are three rows of prisoners at each side of the ship, one above

ACADEMY. GALA EASTER OFFERING!

All Week APRIL 24 to 29. Matinees Wednesday, Saturday.

THE KLAU AND ERLANGER CO. (Inc.) Stupendous Production of General Lew Wallace's Religio-Historic Romance



350 People in Production—Eight Horses in the Thrilling Chariot Race. CURTAIN RISES: EVENINGS, PRECISELY AT 8 O'CLOCK; MATINEES, AT 2 O'CLOCK.

PRICES: Entire Lower Floor and First Three Rows of Balcony—\$2.00; Next Four Rows, \$1.50; Balance, \$1.00. Gallery, Reserved, \$1.00; Admission, 50c. Mail Orders for Seats promptly filled when accompanied by remittance and self-addressed stamped envelope for reply after regular sale opens. Address C. W. Rex, Manager Academy of Music, Richmond, Va.

EXCURSION RATES ON ALL RAILROADS.

beginning to-morrow with a special Easter matinee, will be a musical comedy entitled "How He Won Her," and will be the means of introducing that popular comedian, Mr. Billy (Single) Clifford. The piece is out of the ordinary musical comedy, having a well-balanced plot and very pretty love story. It is in three acts, the

known hotel, The Criterion, at Forty-first Street and Broadway.

Many pleasing specialties are introduced and Mr. Clifford gives his clever imitation of the Broadway chappie, and also sings several of his latest songs written especially for him. The company is a well-balanced one, including the Austin Sisters, who have been identified for the past few years with some of the

flying by spied him and thought they would like the bone, too. They went down and circled about the dog's head, talking to each other all the time. Every now and then they would make a dash at the bone, but whenever they were within reach the dog snapped at them. Finally one of the ravens lighted on the ground behind the dog, while the other still flew about his head. Then the raven that was on the ground went up close to the



WHEN CUPID COMES

he usually announces his presence with a ring sooner or later.

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ROTHERT'S 4TH AND BROAD STS.

the other, each with his oar, which they all move in unison, with clock-like precision. For three years Ben Hur has eluded here under the charge of Arrius, who is greatly affected on hearing that he is a Prince of the House of Hur. There is a sea-fight and the galley is burning and sinking when Ben Hur and Arrius escape and are rescued from a floating spar in the open sea. Arrius adopts the young Jew, who lives with him until the Tribune's death.

The third, fourth and fifth acts carry on the play in equally powerful and spectacular way. The chariot race mentioned above, leads up to the last act in the Palace of Hur, in Jerusalem. Ben Hur returns and tells of the miracles he has seen Him cause the lame to walk, the blind to see and even cured lepers. Arrius brings the news of the discovery of Ben Hur's mother and sister in the Vale of Hinnom and then goes to them to carry the news of the Divine Healer and His presence on the Mount of Olives and beg them to go to Him. The last scene shows the Mount of Olives—hundreds of men, women and children are seen, singing Hosannas. Among them are the mother of Hur, Tirzah and Amrah, who have been cured of the disease by the Divine One, who has just passed. Ben Hur finds his lost ones and they are all united.

Following is the cast which will interpret the play in Richmond:

CHARACTERS IN PRELUDE.

Balthasar, the Egyptian.....Charles Riegel
Gasper, the Greek.....Edward Conroy
Melchior, the Hindoo.....Averell W. Harris
Ben Hur, Judah, son of Ithamar.....Orlin Johnson

Messala.....James J. Ryan
Blondos.....Robert McVade, Jr.
Shiek Ilderim.....Henry Weaver
Arrius, the Tribune.....Charles Riegel

Balthasar.....Charles Riegel
Mulluch.....Averell W. Harris
Horatio.....Charles Canfield
Metellus.....William Roberts

Khaled.....George Wilkes
Cecilius.....Walter Dickinson
Sambelot.....Thomas F. Tracy
Drusus.....Stanley Jessup

Centurion.....Frederick Seales
Officer of the Galley.....Walter Markham
Bather.....Ellen Northington
True.....Mae Burgess

Mother of Hur.....Mabel Bort
Amrah.....Stella Boniface Weaver
Tirzah.....Xaldee Appleton

How He Won Her.

The attraction at the Bijou this week,

first being in Wall Street, amongst the bulls and bears.

The second act is an exact reproduction of the famous board walk at Atlantic City, with the usual side show displays and other amusements pertaining to a summer resort. During the course of this act, Mr. Clifford introduces his latest song success, "Be Good and You'll Be Happy," assisted by twenty chorus girls.

The third act takes place in that well

known hotel, The Criterion, at Forty-first Street and Broadway.

Many pleasing specialties are introduced and Mr. Clifford gives his clever imitation of the Broadway chappie, and also sings several of his latest songs written especially for him. The company is a well-balanced one, including the Austin Sisters, who have been identified for the past few years with some of the

dog, seized the end of the dog's tail in his bill and gave it a hard pinch. When the dog whined round to see what was hurting him, the raven that was in front of him pounced on the bone and flew away with it, and the raven on the ground jumped quickly aside, spread its wings and flew after its mate.

Last year the output of coal in the United States exceeded 300,000,000 tons, or over one-third of the world's annual supply, and only 3 per cent. of this enormous output was exported.



BILLY (SINGLE) CLIFFORD.

BIJOU

Commencing Monday, April 24th

RETURN OF THE FAVORITE

THE MATINEE IDOL,

Billy (Single) Clifford

—IN—

THE LATEST MUSICAL COMEDY,

How He Won Her

Singing Girls

Dancing Girls

Show Girls

Bathing Girls

OPENING WITH SPECIAL MAT. EASTER MONDAY.